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CONSULAR TREATY IS FACING A SNAG IN G.O.P. PROPOSALS

Rejection by Soviet Feared
if 2 Mundt Reservations
Are Approved in Senate

MANSFIELD GUIDES PACT

Fulbright Gives Up Role as
Floor Manager in Move
to Win Republicans

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WASHINGTON, March 8—Potentially serious difficulties developed in the Senate today for the consular treaty with the Soviet Union as Republican opponents moved to attach restrictive reservations to it.

Supporters of the treaty were still confident that they had the votes necessary to approve the treaty, which lays out guidelines for re-establishing consular relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

But there was a new uncertainty about whether they had the votes to defeat the reservations. If the reservations are adopted, it is likely that the treaty will be rejected by the Soviet Union.

The move to attach Senate reservations to the treaty was made by Senator Karl E. Mundt, Republican of South Dakota, who has been leading the opposition to the treaty. After a closed meeting of the Republican Conference, called to discuss the treaty, Senator Mundt announced that he would offer two reservations.

Fulbright Steps Aside

In a move to offset the conservative Republican opposition, it was arranged today for Senator J. W. Fulbright, Arkansas Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to turn over much of the responsibility for steering the treaty through the Senate to the majority leader, Mike Mansfield of Montana.

One of the reservations proposed by Senator Mundt would provide for United States consular officers in the Soviet Union to have the "same right to free expression" as a Soviet consul would have in the United States. It would also stipulate that there be "no limit on the number of American newsmen" in the Soviet Union.

A Difficulty Foreseen

The other reservation, viewed as a source of more difficulty by the treaty supporters, would provide that the treaty not go into effect until one of these two conditions were met: that the President advise Congress there is "no longer a need for United States forces in Vietnam" or that he assure Congress that Soviet arms shipments to North Vietnam were "not delaying or preventing a return of United States troops" from Vietnam.

The Mundt move caught treaty supporters in both parties somewhat by surprise and forced a reappraisal of the prospects for the treaty on the Senate floor.

In advance of the Mundt move, supporters of the treaty had been proceeding on the assumption that at least 75 favorable votes had been rounded up after a concerted effort and

that the treaty would be approved after a perfunctory debate in which the opposition would state its case for the record.

But these political "nose counts," it was feared, could be upset by the Mundt move.

Of the 75 senators believed ready to vote for the treaty, about 20 are unenthusiastic in their support and might vote for the Mundt reservations to mollify the opposition in their constituencies.

Because they directly inject the politically sensitive issue of Vietnam into consideration of the treaty, the Mundt reservations also might pick up some votes among Senators

Much of the opposition to the treaty has been built on the argument that Soviet arms are killing Americans in Vietnam—and that this is no time to make a "bridge building" gesture toward the Soviet. That theme was emphasized today by Senators Norris Cotton, Republican of New Hampshire, and Thomas J. Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, in speeches opposing the treaty.

A reservation requires only a simple majority to be adopted, in contrast to the two-thirds majority vote required for approval of a treaty. The loss of 20 or so votes, therefore, from the ranks of the treaty supporters would make it touch-and-go whether the Mundt reservations could be defeated.

A treaty reservation is a device used by the Senate to designate various features of a treaty that it finds objectionable or not binding upon the United States. While the attachment of a reservation does not require renegotiation of a treaty, the other signatory, if it finds the reservation objectionable, can refuse to approve the treaty.

While the Mundt amendments were ostensibly designed to tie the hands of the United States in implementing the treaty, there was little doubt in Administration circles that their adoption would lead to rejection of the treaty by the Soviet Union.

This point was being emphasized by the treaty supporters. Senator Thurston B. Morton, Republican of Kentucky, who is given much of the credit for rounding up Republican support for the treaty, was telling his wavering colleagues that "a vote for the Mundt reservation is a vote to kill the treaty."

Some supporters of the treaty were fearful that the Administration had complicated their case by a couple of political oversights that could steer some votes to the Mundt reservations.

One oversight was the Administration's failure to invite Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, the recently elected chairman of the Republican Conference, to a White House briefing for Congressional leaders on Vietnam.

Because of her pique, some of her Senate colleagues are fearful that Senator Smith may vote for the Mundt reservations just to spite the Administration.

The Administration, it was believed in some Senate quarters had blundered in letting Senator Fulbright handle the treaty on the Senate floor.

Because of Senator Fulbright's anti-Administration position on Vietnam, it was feared that he would lose perhaps half a dozen Republican votes.

To ease the situation, Senator Fulbright, at the urging of some of his colleagues, stepped aside today as floor manager. Senator Mansfield assumed the role with White House approval.

Another complication in the floor debate developed today when Senator Herman E. Tamm, Democrat of Georgia, introduced an amendment to eliminate a treaty provision, unusual in consular conventions, that would grant diplomatic immunity to consular personnel.